



ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENSE

finding the ways that work

Fred Krupp - President

September 25, 2006

The Honorable Henry Waxman  
2204 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Waxman:

I am writing to thank you for your leadership in combating global warming by introducing H.R. 5642, the Safe Climate Act. I applaud your stalwart advocacy in the U.S. House of Representatives for legislation that would reduce the threat of global warming pollution and preserve a livable world for our children and our grandchildren.

As you know, the effects of global warming are already evident in stronger hurricanes, rising sea levels, and increasing numbers of wildfires; to cite just a few examples. The U.S. must quickly and significantly begin reducing its total greenhouse gas emissions if we are to avoid a significant risk to our climate that most Americans would likely consider "dangerous."

Global average temperature has already risen 0.7 degrees Celsius since pre-industrial times and the best available scientific evidence today indicates that this increase must not be allowed to grow to exceed 2 degrees. Otherwise we can hardly hope to avoid additional, irreversible changes, such as the loss of the Greenland ice sheet and a more than 20 foot rise in sea level. Your bill stems directly from your appreciation of the gravity of these and other threats that unchecked global warming poses.

Because of the urgency with which we must begin reducing the concentration of greenhouse gases in our atmosphere, we must take full advantage of every reasonable means of doing so. Not only must we seek emissions reductions from sectors of the economy that lend themselves more easily to a carbon cap, we must also provide real incentives for real reductions from those sectors that are less so. For example, increasing biological carbon sequestration in soils and biomass resources by changing land management practices holds enormous potential to reduce net greenhouse gas emissions deeply and quickly. Environmental Defense believes that Federal policy should provide financial incentives for biological carbon sequestration and other verifiable farm-based emissions reductions through the unlimited use of such emission "offsets."

Indeed, the use of offsets would allow the U.S. to reduce its net emissions faster than if we rely on industry alone to reduce its emissions. That's why I would appreciate the opportunity to work with you and your staff as your bill moves through Congress to ensure that it enables and encourages the unlimited use of verifiable emissions offsets so that the nation can take full advantage of this important option in reducing its net emissions as rapidly and deeply as possible.

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Thank you again for introducing legislation that confronts the greatest environmental challenge – and embraces the greatest economic opportunity – that Americans face today. Your tireless efforts keep this immensely important issue front and center on Congress' agenda. I look forward to working with you and your staff on the Safe Climate Act as it moves forward in the Congressional process.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Fred Bryant". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Fred" being more legible than the last name "Bryant".